



**U. S. Department of Justice**  
*United States Attorney*  
*Eastern District of Washington*

**PRESS RELEASE**

<b>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</b>  FRIDAY, February 24, 2006	<b>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:</b>  Thomas Rice First Assistant US Attorney (509) 353-2767  ICE Public Affairs (949) 360-3096
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Spokane – James A. McDevitt, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington, announced the arrest of a man who faces federal charges here for illegally transporting Korean aliens across Washington’s international border. A group of 12 smuggled Korean nationals, including seven women and five men, were destined for the Los Angeles area when they were apprehended on November 28, 2005.

Yesterday, Jeong Ho Kim, 38, was taken into custody by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in Los Angeles. He was arrested without incident at an apartment on South Normandie Avenue in Los Angeles. Kim is named in a 13-count indictment handed down by a federal grand jury in the Eastern District of Washington on February 7, 2006, which charges him with conspiracy to transport illegal aliens and 12 counts of aiding and abetting the transportation of illegal aliens.

James A. McDevitt, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington, said, “The Department of Justice and this office place a high priority on these cases because of the serious threat that human smuggling presents to our country and the integrity of our borders.”

ICE began its investigation in November 2005 after Border Patrol agents with U.S. Customs and Border Protection intercepted a rented Chevrolet Tahoe carrying 12 illegal aliens from Korea near the international border in Oroville, Washington. While Kim was not in the Tahoe at the time, according to the indictment, he rented the vehicle at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and instructed a co-conspirator where to pick up the aliens near the border. ICE agents say the investigation into the alien smuggling scheme is ongoing.

“Human smuggling is an enforcement priority for ICE because it undermines the integrity of our nation’s legal immigration system,” said Leigh Winchell, special agent-in-charge of ICE investigations in Washington. “Additionally, smuggled aliens are often treated as a commodity and are exploited by the criminal networks that brought them here.”

Kim made his initial appearance in federal court in Los Angeles yesterday and waived his right to an identity hearing. A magistrate judge ordered him held without bond and Kim agreed to be returned to Spokane to face the charges.

A conviction for conspiracy carries a maximum penalty of 10-years imprisonment and a fine up to \$250,000. Each of the 12 transportation of an illegal alien counts carries a maximum penalty of 5-years imprisonment and a fine up to \$250,000.

This investigation was conducted by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The prosecution is being handled by Pamela Byerly, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington.

An Indictment Contains Allegations That a Defendant Has Committed a Crime. Every Defendant Is Presumed Innocent until and Unless Proven Guilty Beyond a Reasonable Doubt.